

ANNUAL TOWN MEETING FOR SANDWICH
WEDNESDAY 18th MARCH 2015 AT 7PM, GUILDHALL

- Present**
- The Mayor: Councillor Paul Graeme
 - Town Councillors: John Bragg, Bernard Butcher, Paul Carter, Richard Daw, Jac Dunay, Veronica Liote, Mark Moorhouse, Pip Russell, John Scollard, Brian Scott, Jeff Sneller, Jeremy Watts, David Wood
 - John Simmonds MBE, Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Finance and Procurement – Kent County Council
 - Matthew Balfour, Cabinet Member for Environment & Transport – Kent County Council
 - Leyland Ridings MBE, County Councillor for Sandwich – Kent County Council
 - James Pearson, Project Manager (Kent Libraries) – Kent County Council
 - Sally Benge, Strategic Transport & Development Planner (Highways & Transportation) – Kent County Council
 - Ryan Shiel, Combined Member Grant Team (Highways & Transportation) – Kent County Council
 - Stephanie Wadhams, Operations Team (Highways & Transportation) – Kent County Council
 - Roger Walton, Director of Environment & Corporate Assets – Dover District Council
 - Chief Inspector Steve Barlow, District Commander – Kent Police
 - PCSO Ian Norton – Kent Police
 - Ray Foster, Team Leader – Environment Agency
 - Debbie McNamara, Operations Team Leader (The Stour) – Environment Agency
 - Richard Knight, Partnership & Strategic Overview Team Leader – Environment Agency
 - Approximately 100 Members of the Public

1. MAYOR'S WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION TO REPRESENTATIVES

The Mayor welcomed all those present, thanked them for attending and introduced the elected members and officers present.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:

Apologies were given for the following:-

- Town Councillors: Susan Laslett & Joe Trussler
- Paul Carter, Leader – Kent County Council
- John Burr, Director of Highways, Transportation & Waste – Kent County Council
- Nadeem Aziz, Chief Executive – Dover District Council
- Ann Barnes, Kent Police & Crime Commissioner
- Chief Constable Alan Pughsley – Kent Police
- Inspector Guy Thompson – Kent Police
- PCSO Doreen Lee – Kent Police
- Laura Sandys MP
- Martin Leggatt, Head of Assets & Building Control – Dover District Council
- Angela Slaven, Director of Libraries, Registration & Archives – Kent County Council

3. MAYOR'S ANNUAL REPORT

The Mayor explained that his annual report had been printed on the back of the Public Notice, in addition to the information contained therein he reported the following:

- The Mayor thanked the Councillors for their assistance and hard work during his year as Mayor.
- The discovery of Magna Carta and the Charter of the Forest has been of great excitement to the Council. A working group has now drafted a plan for the short term and long term objectives, which will be considered in detail by the Council this coming Monday (23rd March).
- The public will be aware that the town council has raised the precept by 3.43%, this works out at an increase of £2.68 on a band 'D' property for the year. The Council has voted to double its funding to the Gazen Salts Nature Reserve from £4,000 to £8,000 this year, to help this

ecologically important community facility fully recover from the disastrous tidal flooding of December 2013. In addition, with 2015 being an election year, the new budget allows for the fixed costs associated with polling – should there be a contested Town Council election - and for training for new councillors, to support them in representing the people of Sandwich effectively.

- The Mayor introduced Mr Richard Ralph, who is the Chairman of the Town Team and Co-ordinator of the Neighbourhood Plan. Mr Ralph provided the following information:

4. MINUTES

The Minutes of the Annual Assembly of the Town Meeting of Sandwich, held on Wednesday 19th March 2014, were considered and approved. There were no matters arising from those minutes not covered elsewhere on this agenda.

5. QUESTION & ANSWER SESSION 2014

The notes taken from the Question & Answer Session in 2014 were considered and no follow-up questions were received.

6. STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS

The following accounts had been made available on the Town Council's website prior to the meeting:

- 2013/14 audited accounts for Sandwich Town Council
- 2013/14 financial statements for Sandwich Toll Bridge Fund
- Statements of accounts as at 31st January 2015 for both the Council and the Fund

A member of the public asked about the investment strategy for the Fund's reserves and suggested that the current return was too low, and that the Trustee should invest some of the capital in projects for the good of the town. The Mayor explained that the Charity has a Statement of Purpose that answers many of these questions. The enquirer agreed that he would read this document and raise any further questions directly with the Mayor.

7. PRESENTATION BY JOHN SIMMONDS MBE

8. QUESTION & ANSWER SESSION

A question and answer session then took place, details of which are attached. Priority was given to questions that had been received in advance of the meeting and then time was allocated for new questions and issues not already covered.

9. CLOSE OF MEETING

The Mayor thanked all those present for their input. The meeting was closed at 9.40pm.